

Executive Proclamation

State of South Dakota

Office of the Governor

Whereas, Merrill Edward DeWald was born on July 4, 1919, to Merritt and Stella DeWald, on the family farm near Armour, South Dakota, the grandson of homesteaders in Dakota Territory; and,

Whereas, Birthdays commemorate the first day of our lives, and we celebrate the birthdays of those we love as we recognize the joys and sorrows we have shared, the strength we have gained from the obstacles and hardships we have conquered, and the small daily pleasures life offers; and,

Whereas, Merrill married Ruth Sparks of Armour on Christmas Day of 1941, and to this union, two daughters were born, Linda and Nila, and 6 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren joined the family; and,

Whereas, Merrill joined the Army in March 1942, serving with the 90th Infantry Division, landed on Utah Beach during the Normandy Invasion on D-Day, fought inland to the French Falaise Gap, Battle of the Bulge and earned the Bronze Star. He returned home to South Dakota in the fall of 1945; and,

Whereas, Merrill owned and operated DeWald Motor Supply in Wagner and Lake Andes and farmed for 35 years, serving his community as a volunteer fireman, serving on boards of the Wagner Hospital, Chamber of Commerce, United Methodist Church, Jaycees, Izaak Walton, and VFW; and,

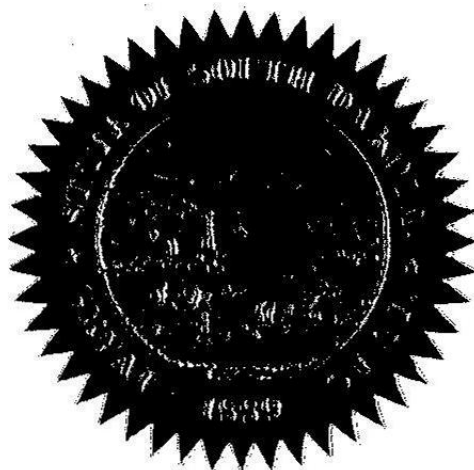
Whereas, Merrill is enjoying his retirement building and refinishing furniture that fill the homes of his daughters and grandchildren, fishing, playing pool, telling stories and playing practical jokes on everyone; and,

Whereas, It is only fitting that Merrill celebrate on the Fourth of July because of his love and loyalty to his country. The United States flag with 48 stars that was given to him by his grandfather will once again fly over his home on his 85th birthday with all the good wishes, fanfare, and celebration such a milestone warrants, as his friends and relatives will gather to honor him and celebrate his life and the camaraderie of the day; and it is fitting and proper for the Governor to make note of this milestone in the life of a man who has lived an exemplary life for all to emulate:

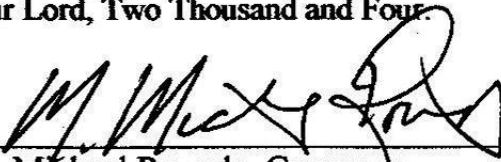
Now, Therefore, I, M. Michael Rounds, Governor of the state of South Dakota, do hereby proclaim July 4, 2004, as

MERRILL DEWALD DAY


in South Dakota, and I join all his many friends and relatives in wishing him a very happy birthday, good health, and great happiness.



In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the state of South Dakota, in Pierre, the Capital City, this Twenty-fifth Day of June in the Year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Four.


M. Michael Rounds, Governor

Attest:


Chris Nelson, Secretary of State